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ABSTRACT

Mentoring is a form of adult socialization for professional-level and leadership roles, and plays a critical part in developing leadership for the academic administration of colleges and universities. Sexism in these high level positions means that men, who are most likely to be mentors, choose other men as proteges, leaving women without access to the top of the work structure. Interviews with mentors and their proteges have shown that the mentor serves as a link between the pool of qualified candidates and the inner circle of leadership. After selecting a candidate, the mentor provides his protege with opportunities to learn and practice, and to increase knowledge, performance, and motivation. A mentor is usually found through performing an important and visible task. Once chosen, the gates of the inner leadership circle begin to open for the protege and contacts are developed through a colleague system. The protege's competence is developed or tested by the mentor. The mentor ensures that the protege learns the standards of the leadership group; he also determines the trustworthiness of the protege, and maintains control of the leader selection process. The protege establishes trust by being available, accessible, predictable, and loyal. The disadvantages of the protege role include role entrapment and tokenism, both of which curtail professional growth. Women may not gain a mentor or access to high levels of leadership without a struggle, but rather than waiting to be chosen they can share the professional knowledge and power they currently hold. (WAS)

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PROFESSIONAL ADVANCEMENT KIT

WHAT TO DO UNTIL THE MENTOR ARRIVES?

by

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CG 016890

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About the Association: Founded in 1916, the National Association for Women Deans, Administrators and Counselors is committed to strengthening opportunities for women and girls in education. . . in the public and private sector—from elementary through continuing education. In recent years the Association has focused on the training and advancement of women administrators. The Journal of the Association, published continuously since 1937 and winner of two Educational Press Awards, is one of the programs of the Association which serves to train, advance, and inform women in education. Another program is a monograph series for and about women in education. "What To Do Until the Mentor Arrives?" is one of the publications in this series.

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INTRODUCTION

Most of you in recent weeks have probably read an article or two on mentoring—it's hard not to find one. This latest "mania," as one author called it, has been generated largely by women like us who have been doing a lot of thinking and writing about our careers and men's careers and the differences between the two. We became curious about this after observing that even though a female and a male might have equal abilities, equal desires, and equal energy and drive, somehow the male ended up the head of the organization and the female ended up his wife, his secretary, or his associate dean.

After more thought it became clear to us that while males and females might start off the same, men were getting help and women weren't; at least not to the same degree or in the same way men were. As time went by, the male seemed to accumulate advantages and the female accumulated disadvantages. We called this variously sex-role stereotyping, sex discrimination, sex prejudice, or just plain sexism. I don't need to detail this for you; there is a mountain of work on the subject.

But let us consider the problem of how men accumulate advantages and reach their goals. How are men helped and who helps them? In our society the work world is largely designed by men, for men, and the help that is available is provided by men, for men. I think that's why we're called "help-less" females.

When it comes to reaching the very top of the work structure, older men, who are the only ones up there, make a special effort to help the younger ones. We call this "the old boys' network." By dissecting this phenomenon, we find tucked away at the center of all institutions one or two older boys who REALLY help—these are the mentors. I want to look at them today. I want to talk about who mentors are, what they do, why they do it, what difference they make, and finally, before some neo-neo-freudian accuses us females of having *mentor*-envy, what we can do if we don't have one!

Before I tell you my own discoveries about mentors, let me give you a little background, beginning, as any liberally educated graduate would, with the Greek classics.

The term mentor, as you probably know, was first used by Homer in *The Odyssey*. Mentor is the name of an old and trusted friend of King Ulysses who is left to care for and nurture Telemachus, Ulysses' son, while the king is away fighting in the Trojan War. Mentor assists Telemachus in learning how to go about his father's work. He introduces the prince to other rulers and teaches him how to act. Thus the name mentor came to refer to a wise and trusted counselor who advises an aspiring leader and helps him to come to power.

It is common now to hear the term mentor applied to everyone from high school teachers to adult volunteers. I believe it is more helpful to confine the term to the specific arena in which it developed, namely, the realm of leadership, meaning the realm of kings, princes, heads of governments and, I trust I'm not stretching it too far, leaders of colleges and universities.

In thinking about mentoring as it applies to academic administration in colleges and universities, I have found it useful to keep in mind that mentoring is a form of adult socialization for professional-level roles, especially leadership roles. I want to stress this because mentoring plays a critical role in developing leadership in academe.

IDENTIFYING ADMINISTRATIVE LEADERSHIP TALENT

A principal task of any leadership group is to ensure continuity of leadership. The search for new recruits is therefore a legitimate and necessary activity of the leadership group, although the search is not always formally acknowledged or planned. In colleges and universities, senior line officers, the principal leaders, are responsible for identifying and developing new leadership.

As most administrators will admit, however, the development of leaders in academe is a sometime thing. Unlike other organizations, such as business corporations, leadership development in academe is not usually recognized as an important activity and is not formally planned. Many faculty and faculty *cum* administrators feel that individuals need no training in administration to do administrative work. This amateurist mystique acts against attempts to institute standards requiring the formal preparation and socialization of administrative personnel. Because academe eschews formal adminis-

trative training, informal ways of teaching are important in colleges and universities. Mentoring is one such informal means of teaching roles and socializing adults in academe.

CHARISMATIC LEADERSHIP

The other useful approach to mentoring is through the concept of charismatic leadership. Developed by Max Weber (1947), this concept describes the process by which individuals are selected and prepared for specific leadership functions apart from the normal tasks of society. Weber labelled the process charismatic because the leader is selected by virtue of possessing "a certain quality of personality by which he is set apart from ordinary men and treated as endowed with . . . exceptional powers or qualities" (Weber 1947, p.358). The mentor can identify and promote such a person to a position of leadership.

The charismatic leader is unique, special, divinely favored. But, as Weber explained, the mystique surrounding the original choice of a charismatic leader is difficult to sustain in the selection of subsequent leaders. The selection process becomes routinized with time, and more mundane bureaucratic and meritocratic criteria affect the choice of leaders. So it is the case with administrative leadership selection in academe. Nowadays in order to be selected as an administrative leader, an individual must present evidence of merit, must follow a prescribed selection process, and yet must possess special, unique gifts over and above the other candidates. Any number of accounts of presidential, dean, and chairman selections in academe will verify this.

However, even the blend of bureaucratic, meritocratic, and charismatic criteria masks a stronger tendency in the selection process—that is the tendency toward homogeneity. Professional homogeneity requires that members of a profession possess not only the attributes necessary to perform the profession's common task, but also have similar attitudes and behavior and be of the same race, sex, ethnic origin, and religion. For the most part, academic administrations, like professions, "share many of the characteristics of communities. They tend toward homogeneity and shared norms and attitudes. Their members depend greatly on mutual understanding and common standards. Interactions are strong but informal, often club-like in atmosphere, with strong dependence on colleagues" (Epstein, 1970 p. 968). There is usually more than a grain of truth in references to the inner circle of administrators at an institution as "Old Main Types," the "President's Kitchen Cabinet," the "Dean's Henchmen" or, in larger terms, "The Old Boy's Network."

It is not my purpose here to explain why or how homogeneity is developed or is maintained in professions. For the time being, let us simply allow that those who select leaders tend to require that their candidates be homogeneous as well as possess special qualities. Individuals who deviate from the master characteristics of the inner circle do not usually have what is sought as "charisma," but those who possess enhanced group characteristics have charisma often called talent.

Moreover, as numerous writers have pointed out, difference in terms of such "master status" characteristics as race or sex is enough to disqualify potential candidates from being considered for group membership, much less leadership roles (Laws, 1975; Epstein, 1970; Kanter, 1977). It is this unspoken law of homogeneity that women challenge when we aspire to leadership roles. I will return to this later.

It is a fact of life in most organizations that many more people are qualified to be leaders than can be admitted to the inner circle of leadership at any one time. Selection is necessary. The mentor is one link between the pool of qualified candidates and the inner circle. In many cases, the mentor is the central figure in the inner circle. From this vantage point, the mentor can evaluate many people and can invite individuals into the inner circle. Thus, mentors serve as talent scouts and as gatekeepers for the inner circle.

It is entirely possible to gain access to and a principal role in an inner circle of leadership in academe without the aid of a mentor. Indeed, the diffuse nature of leadership development in higher education is such that the importance of mentoring is not well established. But it is also clear that no one rises to leadership without being vouched for by powerful individuals, usually other leaders. As Samuel

Johnson said, "mere unassisted merit advances slowly if—what is not very common—it advances at all." The advantages of being identified by a mentor are early recognition and speedy advancement. The mentor is the person who speeds up the acceptance of a talented individual into the inner circle.

Having identified a likely candidate, the task of the mentor is to school the protégé in the norms of performance of the inner circle, to provide the protégé with opportunities to learn and to practice, and to reward the protégé's performance so that the protégé increases her knowledge, performance, and motivation (Wheeler, 1966)*. In so doing, the mentor takes risks but also stands to receive rewards. The first risk is deciding to have a protégé at all. If a mentor picks someone who does not succeed, the failure will reflect on him. However, if he picks someone who does well, the mentor gains in the eyes of others and develops a valuable colleague who owes him something.

The basic style of work between the mentor and protegé is face-to-face interaction, large amounts of it. By this method, the mentor is able to observe the strengths and weaknesses of the protégé and to judge them by the standards of the inner circle. The protégé learns about the inner circle and also about the mentor through these face-to-face interactions. The mentor's self-disclosure is at the heart of the protégé's training. For the purpose of the relationship is, as one protégé phrased it, "to put oneself to school with the mentor: to learn all he has to teach." In certain important respects, the mentor is therefore both school and schoolmaster. While the mentor undertakes some risk in disclosing himself to the protégé he may develop a loyal and devoted colleague and friend as a result of his frankness.

INSIDE THE MENTOR-PROTÉGÉ RELATIONSHIP

Now let us turn to a closer examination of the mentor-protégé relationship in higher education, primarily from the point of view of the protégé. The evidence I bring to bear on this relationship is drawn from a series of interviews we conducted during the past year with college administrators, most of whom had indicated in a prior survey that they believed they had a mentor or mentors.* Some of the administrators interviewed also identified themselves as mentors. The individuals interviewed were in high-level posts in academic or student affairs administration; nearly all had earned a Ph.D. or a professional degree and many had been faculty members. Each interview revealed a unique relationship that changed the protégé's, and often the mentor's life.

In most cases, the mentors were supervisors in the protégés' first administrative jobs. Typically, the mentors were very highly placed: they were either deans, provosts, presidents, or some combination of these positions. There was a predominance of male mentors. Male protégés reported having male mentors exclusively, while female protégés reported having both male and female mentors. Several protégés reported having more than one mentor, sometimes at the same time. In some cases, there appeared to be a "mentor team" who worked with the protégé. The institutions where the mentors and protégés worked represented the three major Carnegie classifications: research and doctoral granting, comprehensive, and liberal arts. These are the parameters of the evidence. It remains only to say that these findings are speculative and have yet to be corroborated by other research.

How Does a Protégé Get A Mentor?

Performance of an important and visible task is the usual way to find a mentor or to have a mentor find you. As Kanter (1979) has pointed out, competence or high performance is usually not sufficient to gain power or the attention of the powerful. One has to do something that is important to the organization, that goes beyond normal job responsibilities, and that may involve some risk.

Performing this task can happen accidentally, coincidentally, or quite deliberately, but the performance must be authentic. The protégé may serve on a committee with the mentor and make important contributions to the committee's work or she may provide expertise for the resolution of the problem

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*For the purposes of convenience, I am going to refer to the mentor as he and the protégé as she.

*I gratefully acknowledge the work of Anne Salimbene, doctoral candidate at the Center and also Dr. Mary Ann Sagaria, who initiated the project with me.

the mentor is concerned about, or she may develop as a leader in one sphere, e.g. faculty. In any case, the protégé's objective is for the mentor to identify her as someone with potential for leadership and to decide to assist her.

The next phase begins when the mentor *chooses* the protégé to work with him closely. By choosing the protégé, the mentor opens the gate of the inner circle to her. Generally, the protégé is given a role lesser than the mentor's but one that places her in close, often daily, contact with him. A staff role is ideally suited for this. But occasionally, the protégé is selected by the mentor for a major role on her own before the relationship has really developed. This is another risk on the part of the mentor and usually means the protégé comes highly recommended by trusted colleagues. In one example we encountered, the individual moved from a low-level faculty post with no prior administrative experience to the position of provost, at the request of the mentor who was president of the institution. We call this the Jane Russell Syndrome. Such spectacular ascents are unlikely given the current situation in academe, including, not least, affirmative action requirements. In other words, I do *not* advise that you hang around the campus lunch counter waiting to be discovered.

But even an invitation to work with the mentor in a lesser capacity usually means increased prestige and status for the protégé. Indeed, enough is different and exciting about the appointment that the protégé feels (and is viewed by others) as being specially chosen. As one person said, "there is a sense of having hands laid on," like an ordination. This is the potency of the process of charismatic leadership selection that Weber describes.

A mentor-protégé relationship creates possibilities for the protégé. It causes the protégé to consider her career and its possibilities. Typically, the protégé is motivated by the relationship to develop herself beyond her earlier expectations, and the mentor is motivated to consider just how far and how high the protégé can go. Here are some of the protégés' comments on the phenomenon:

"My mentor gave me a vision of my possibilities. I was pushed to do and be more than I believed myself capable of;"

"Sometimes we need someone outside ourselves to help us take a look at ourselves, to push us. The mentor says, 'you ought to do this. I'll show you how;' "

"Something special comes from interacting with people who are interested in your career;"

"It's important for someone to tell you you're on the right track. You feel obligated to keep trying."

Some mentors are specific about the objective they are working toward for their protégé. Their protégés knew they were being "groomed" for a presidency, a provostship, for a deanship. Other mentors, however, do not specify the position they have in mind for the protégé, but infer that it will be an important one. Many of the protégés felt that their mentors had a strategy for accomplishing their objectives in mind. That strategy usually had two components: developing the protégé's contacts, and developing her competence.

Developing Contacts: The Colleague System

Recent works by a number of researchers have pointed to the critical importance of colleague systems in the professions. Lawyers (Epstein, 1970), doctors (Becker, 1961), and academics (Cameron, 1978), have all developed systems to communicate with each other about their specialties, about their performance and contributions, and about the members of the profession themselves. These "invisible colleges," as they are referred to in the academic disciplines, carry on important, if covert work among professionals, including administrators.

Colleague systems are the means by which the mentor's role gains potency beyond the institution in which the mentor works. The mentor's ability to link the protégé with other academic institutions is often crucial for the protégé's advancement. In addition, the mentor's ability to place his protégé in another institution through his colleague system allows the mentor and protégé to avoid the potentially awkward assumption that the protégé will succeed the mentor. Placing a protégé in another college or university also expands the mentor's sphere of influence. Many presidents, like many senior faculty, pride themselves on where their bright young men have gone and what high positions they have achieved in other institutions.

Contacts: Who Benefits? Arranging opportunities for the protégé to make contacts and to gain visibility with important others is usually done conscientiously by the mentor. The mentor may take his protégé with him to meetings or send her in his place. He may make introductions, write letters of nomination or recommendation, arrange for the protégé to receive assistance from others whom he feels are important for the protégé to work with or know. The assumption by the protégé is that these contacts are arranged to help her career, at least in the long run.

A major difficulty some protégés encountered, however, was that while the promotion of the protégé's career was the mentor's purported objective, events revealed that the mentor was actually attempting to arrange the protégé's career to suit the mentor's needs. Protégés who discovered that mentors were more concerned for the effect the protégés' placements would have on their own status and prestige than what it would do for the protégés sharply criticized their mentors. Some protégés reported accepting jobs against their better judgements because their mentors wanted them to; others spoke of refusing jobs for the same reason. In one case a mentor was so angry when a protégé turned down a job that he refused to recommend her for other jobs. As a result, the protégé felt the mentor cared little for her needs but was merely interested in "placing" another one of "his people" in a prestigious job. "He prided himself on his stable of winners," she said, "and didn't much care for horses with minds of their own."

Often protégés were so focused on their own careers and the ways the mentors were helping them that they tended not to be aware that they were part of the mentor's "gameplans" or how they might be part of even a large organizational plan. If they were part of larger plans, they tended to view these plans as part of the way things work and a test of their abilities to make things work for them personally.

Competence

When it comes to ensuring the protégé's competence, the mentor has three important things to do: he must see that the protégé knows the standards of the leadership group, he must find out if the protégé can be trusted, and he must maintain control of the process of selecting leaders (Epstein, 1970).

Standards. The standards of the leadership group are the norms of performance and belief that are shared by the group. These may be referred to colloquially as the "The Old Siwash Way" or "The Bendix Philosophy." These norms of performance and belief are part of the institutional saga, or even of a leadership cult if the chief executive is particularly charismatic or has held the position for a long time. The mentor must see that the protégé learns "how things are done" at old Siwash U.

In addition, the mentor must teach the protégé the mentor's own standards for performance: what he expects of himself and from others. Since leaders are often responsible for establishing work standards, learning the mentor's standards and measuring herself against them is a useful exercise for the protégé.

Finally, the protégé must develop a personal ethic. The mentor may stimulate this actively or passively, by positive or negative example. Most mentors identified in the interviews appeared to encourage or at least to expect the protégé to develop and articulate a set of personal standards, although long philosophical discussions between mentor and protégé were not common, and protégés reported that disagreements regarding standards were often ticklish to handle with the mentor.

Trust. Another aspect of competence the mentor must assess in the protégé is trustworthiness. The most primitive villagers and the inner circle of corporate leaders share a similar sense about the leadership group. They know they must rely on each other in order to function and survive. In simpler civilizations, candidates for leadership are given certain tasks to test their courage, competence, and trustworthiness. In our complex society and in most of our institutions, this basic process is often disguised. But clearly a basic purpose of the mentor-protégé relationship is to provide the mentor (and others) with opportunities to test the protégé and to determine her trustworthiness.

The power configuration of the mentor-protégé relationship makes the burden of trust-building primarily the protégé's. The mentor's own trustworthiness in the relationship is generally not in question. Moreover, the mentor can be untrustworthy in the relationship without suffering the same penalties to his reputation or power as the protégé would if she were to be untrustworthy.

Individuals we interviewed who felt they had been betrayed by their mentors tended to adopt one of two strategies. They either severed the relationship with the mentor, thereby sometimes penalizing themselves more than the mentor, or they endured the relationship but vowed when they came to power that they would get even with the mentor personally or they would never do the same thing to others as their mentor had done to them. I refer to these as the Two Golden Rules of Faulty Mentoring:
Golden Rule #1: "Do unto others (later) what they have done to you!"
Golden Rule #2: "Do unto others what was *not* done for you!"

The protégé establishes trust in four ways: by being available, accesible, predictable, and loyal (Jennings, 1971).

Availability underscores the importance of frequent face-to-face contact with the mentor. As both protégés and mentors pointed out in the interviews, "everyone needs someone to talk to, especially a leader, but it must often be in confidence." The protégé can be the person the mentor talks with. The protégé can serve as a sounding board for the mentor's ideas or can simply listen when the mentor needs to talk. One protégé we interviewed who had a long-term relationship with her mentor, spoke quite candidly about the importance of knowing the times when she had better "be around" even if it meant keeping late hours. These were times when the mentor had just finished important meetings or presentations. At such times, the protégé said, she usually found work of her own to do, but she was really just making herself available if "the boss" needed to talk to her. By making herself available to the mentor, the protégé is taken into the mentor's confidence on matters of concern to him. The protégé learns about the mentor's work and may be asked by the mentor to assist in important ways.

The protégé can also build trust by being *accessible* to the mentor. The protégé must demonstrate openness and willingness to assist the mentor by giving her best thoughts and suggestions. Work on common, important leadership tasks is the setting in which this often occurs. The skills of the protégé are put to use by the mentor in the work of the organization.

A mentor may often be a hard taskmaster, but this was felt by the protégés we interviewed to be necessary to build the protégé's capacities and "to really find out what the protégé is made of." Several protégés commented that they felt stretched or pushed to do more than they thought they could accomplish. Other protégés felt that their mentors increased their capacity fairly gradually by adding responsibilities on a yearly basis. Some protégés rebelled against the pushing, feeling they were not ready for the things the mentor wanted them to do. Some even felt compelled to sever the relationship because of the pressure the mentor placed on them.

In addition to working hard together, there is usually a serious attempt by the mentor and the protégé to create openness and an easy exchange of views. In this way the protégé and mentor build up a rapport. They may often be viewed as a team or even as one entity.

Becoming an extension of the mentor has advantages and disadvantages. On the positive side, the protégé often gains access to important people and important meetings and may even assume the mentor's position temporarily, by virtue of her association with him. The disadvantages of close identification with a mentor become obvious when the protégé acquires the negative liabilities the mentor has accrued or when the protégé is not seen by others as a separate person. These occurrences may have serious implications in terms of the protégé's mobility or career success.

A distinct but related problem of strong identification with the mentor is role entrapment. Several protégés who had long-term (10-15 years) relationships with their mentors came to realize with some bitterness that their mentors saw them only as their "bright, young" protégés. The protégés felt trapped. But separating from their mentors was difficult for them, because the mentors held the power to get them positions elsewhere. Other protégés felt free to leave their relationships. Often by that time the protégé had lost much of the benefit of the association with the mentor.

Entrapment of another sort may occur within the mentor-protégé relationship, particularly for women and minorities who are protégés. This is called tokenism. Because a woman is frequently the only female in an all-male circle, the group may make an effort to encapsulate her as the token female. Kanter (1978), Laws (1975), and others have described quite cogently the dynamics of why and how this occurs. The sense of specialness or exceptionalism, as Epstein (1970) terms it, which makes the

female protégé feel good about being recognized and treated specially, may also cause her to feel she is an exception to other women, and thereby encourage her to participate in keeping other females out of the group.

Tokenism can apply to male protégés as well, but considerable research on sex roles and sexism suggests that sex is a master characteristic of leadership groups that often supercedes other status characteristics. I believe tokenism is the crucial barrier to leadership for women—and I will return to this.

The third way in which the mentor can determine if the protégé can be trusted is by evaluating her *predictability*. By spending time together and working together, the mentor develops a sense of what the protégé can and will do in specific situations. By observing the protégé performing, the mentor learns whether he can confidently "defend and justify" the protégé's decisions to others (Jennings, 1971). As Jennings points out, this doesn't mean the protégé must strive to act in precisely the same way as the mentor would. Often the mentor may have no preconceived notion of how the protégé *ought* to respond, within a certain range of competent performance, but rather the mentor is more interested in *how* the protégé responds to difficult situations. Does she get angry and lose her temper, or sulk and grow silent?

The final aspect of trust-building between the mentor and protégé is demonstrating *personal loyalty*. The relationship that develops between a mentor and protégé is likely to involve an emotional bonding. Levinson (1978) asserts it is a love relationship. Yet whether or not deep affection exists between the two, the protégé usually feels a sense of loyalty or gratitude, and often a sense of obligation toward her mentor. Many protégés spoke of their mentors in parental terms. "I was like a second son", "he was like a father to me", "I am obligated to her to do well in the same way I am to my parents."

In certain respects the protégé is freer than the mentor. Personal loyalty is not an obligation but an option for the protégé. This appears to be part of the freedom the protégé is allowed as part of learning to be a leader. It is as though the mentor has said, "You must decide where your personal loyalties lie, even your loyalty to me."

Loyalty on the part of the mentor for the protégé is more important. This loyalty involves the mentor's willingness to fight for the protégé in the inner circle at crucial times (Kanter, 1977) and to defend her from criticism. The leadership arena in academe is as competitive and political as any other. Woodrow Wilson is reported to have said, "I learned about politics from the faculty at Princeton, then I went to Washington to practice among the amateurs." The act of including the protégé in the group is sometimes resisted by others; or the tasks the protégé is assigned may be opposed; opportunities for larger responsibilities may be fiercely contested; the actions of the protégé may be criticized, and all of this may take place out of the protégé's presence. The mentor must be both willing and able to defend the protégé in these circumstances. To do so, he must be sure of the quality and potential of her contributions, he must know how and in what ways she can be counted on, and he must have a sense that she is worth fighting for.

Nearly all protégés we talked to reported that their mentors had defended them or fought for them at some time. Some said their mentors had literally saved their jobs, or had backed crucial decisions for their sake. This belief in and support of the protégé is probably the most crucial aspect of the mentoring experience for the protégé. Knowledge of this support clearly gave the protégés confidence and self-esteem, not to mention a sense of loyalty.

Control of the Leadership Process. The final way in which the mentor ensures the protégé's competence is by *maintaining control of the leadership process.* Once a protégé is given a major leadership role he or she will have the three most valued and valuable things leaders possess: power, resources, and opportunity. In a leadership role the protégé will be less controllable. Therefore, before allowing someone to lead, the responsible mentor will make sure the protégé knows the standards, can be trusted to behave reasonably given those standards, and will act to ensure the continuity of the inner circle and perhaps of the organization itself. Given these expectations of the protégé and the high stakes involved for both parties, it is not surprising that the mentor-protégé relationship itself is uncommon and that it seldom totally succeeds.

WOMEN, MENTORS, AND LEADERSHIP

It is in the nature of leaders to attempt to maintain their source of power and influence as long as possible. Mentoring is one way, however imperfect, by which a leadership group in general and a single leader in particular can attempt to assure continuity and to pass on a particular brand of leadership to the next generation.

Notions of bureaucracy and meritocracy have confounded the "natural" desire of leaders to name their successors or to establish forms of dynastic control. Nevertheless, while it is now unusual for a college president to serve for 40 years or for a dean to name his son as his successor, it is still the rule that white males compose the executive cohort in over 90 percent of the colleges in this land.

To new contenders for places in the leadership arena, academic administration can seem bewildering and intimidating. Most aspirants for leadership positions require some assistance in gaining the contacts and competence they need. Recently, women have entered the arena as a new class of contenders and have sought to use the same support mechanisms, only to meet with a severely limited response, not to say active resistance. Fortunately, this time when the gates have been slammed shut women have pounded on the doors and demanded to know why. And they've begun to give some good hard thought to what is wrong with a system that won't tolerate a worthy person for a leadership role simply because "he" is a she.

I have tried to describe what mentoring does for individuals in organizations generally and to point out some reasons why it is less likely to be useful to women as a device for leadership development; namely because it supports homogeneity and tokenism. In conclusion, I'd like to give some thought toward a *feminist perspective on mentoring*.

I venture to say that everyone in this room knows this organization has been richly endowed throughout its history with effective, dynamic, talented women leaders.

I venture to say everyone in this room knows there are women who could do *every* job in their school or college that is now being done by a man.

I venture to say everyone in this room knows that this will not and cannot happen if we leave it to the men in those positions to bring it about.

Women are *not* going to be invited into *any* circle or *any* organization in *any* number above two *unless* they "*insist*," unless they *believe*, unless they "*fight*" for their share.

That is what equality is all about—a fair share—and we are going to get it. And mentoring is going to help us.

The essence of mentoring is sharing: sharing power, sharing competence, sharing self. The problem with the context in which mentoring has occurred is that the men who have benefited from it, who claim to have invented it, have not wanted to share it with others, and they have arranged matters so that women and others different from them do not benefit from it.

Not long ago a friend and I were dividing a piece of scrumptious chocolate cake. We were dividing it for two reasons: we knew we should not have any, and we knew we couldn't resist. So we were dividing one piece between us, each lusting for the whole piece. At that incredible moment of culinary anticipation and moral tension when my knife was poised above the cake and I was torn between love of friend and love of my stomach, my friend grinned slyly and said, "You know, my mother has a custom for circumstances like these."

"Oh?" I said, knife still poised.

"It was her rule," my friend continued calmly, "that the person who does the dividing has to let the other person pick the piece she wants."

I can't help but think that such kitchen table ethics would serve us well as we analyze what the trouble is about in women's efforts to enter and succeed in education. Put as simply as the nursery school lesson they obviously forgot, men have not wanted to share. They have wanted to cut the cake and serve the pieces their way. All the talk about meritocratic values, scholarly excellence, leadership, and expertise is mere rationalization for the basic gut-feeling *I don't want to share*.

When it comes down to it, isn't this one of the basic problems in the world at large? Men don't want to share with women; rich don't want to share with poor; the powerful with the less powerful, the strong with the weak.

And when you put the problem as one of sharing—of equality—it is possible to separate some sex differences from attitudes about sharing. Haven't all of us known men who are willing if not always eager to include women in their activities? Men who seem not to consider it amazing that a woman could do something as well as they. Who, in fact, welcome the shared efforts? We need to identify and work with such men who are willing to share just as we must find women who will share and work together.

The real concern for me is not so much whether I as a woman or women in general are *assisted* to achieve positions of power and authority. Some of us will achieve them, as have some men, without much aid from others, only the lack of serious resistance. What concerns me most is the question: Is the person who achieves that position, that power, committed to serving the larger group and to sharing what they have gained with others?

I do not believe most women have ever considered it as realistic or desirable to do as male society has done, to try to gerrymander a world, whether it is a university or nation, for their own particular, if misconstrued, benefit. But we *do* expect our share of the opportunity, our share of the benefits, and I believe we are also ready to share in the price that must be paid in terms of effort and pain—have we not paid this price for centuries without the gain? Adrienne Rich wrote a poem in 1974 called "Power," in part of which she says:

> Today I was reading about Marie Curie:
> she must have known she suffered from radiation sickness
> her body bombarded for years by the element
> she purified
> It seems she denied to the end
> the source of the cataracts on her eyes
> the cracked and suppurating skin of her finger ends
> till she could no longer hold a test-tube or a pencil
> She died a famous woman denying
> her wounds
> denying
> her wounds came from the same source as her power

That poem was taken from Rich's book *The Dream of a Common Language*. We who work in education as counselors, administrators, faculty, and leaders also share a common dream. We are striving to create organizations that reflect and enhance the best in human life.

Those of us who desire to become all we can be are not going to be forestalled by false dichotomies—all or nothing—family or career--power or glory—job or pay—access but not outcome, love but not honor.

So far not very many women have had a mentor, and even fewer have been a mentor. Most of us believe mentoring is for special people, not us, and it's done by special people, not us. Mentoring is for the super-talented, the clever, the wise, the crafty, the powerful. Mentoring is for men.

And when a woman is mentored, she's one of a kind, to be praised and kept in her place—a token, an oddity. Marya Mannes says, "A woman with ideas and the ability to express them is something of a social embarrassment, like an unhousebroken pet." A token can never be trusted, you know, not really. Well, there is only one way to change that—only one: *stop being a token*. And there is only one way to stop being a token, and that's by bringing other women in.

Everyone in this room has a little power. Everyone in this room knows a little something about the organization in which they work. Everyone in this room knows a lot of other people—some with power, some with knowledge, some with know-how. And some is a lot more than none. Wait around till some powerful, knowledgeable, kindly male picks you for a protégé—if you want. If it happens, *if*, you will probably move far and fast; you may reach that post you always dreamed about, but you'll be alone. If we

let *only* men cut the cake and give it out; if we let *only* men guard the door and open it we're going to keep on getting a sliver here, a sliver there—one women in here, one person in there.

No, my answer is not to wait until the mentor arrives. My answer, is, if you want to have a mentor, be one. Wherever you are, whoever you are, you already have knowledge, you already have know-how, you already can share.

I want to close by returning to the original story that Homer wrote about Mentor and Telemachus to show you what I mean by choosing either to adopt the male model of mentoring and of leadership development or choosing to create our own feminist model of human development which I believe may be based on elements of sharing and empowering people, rather than exploiting and dominating them. As I told you at the beginning of this session, the story of Mentor and Telemachus is the prototypic model of the mentor-protégé relationship. It is told, however, as a story about how male protégés become leaders with the help of older male assistance. But as we have learned time and again in uncovering our past as women, in reconnecting ourselves with women who came before us, men's lives and men's pasts are not all there is. We must stop believing the lies they have made up about us and about themselves.

The vision of the blind poet Homer was larger than the self-glorifying tale that has come down to us about Mentor and Telemachus. Can you guess what is the lie? No, I am not going to tell that Homer was a woman. But Mentor was! Mentor was the Goddess Athene, who disguised herself as old, trusted Mentor in order to get Telemachus to exert himself to correct the imbalance in his kingdom that his father's absence had caused.

Education and its leaders are out of balance too, but we don't need goddesses to set it straight—only mere mortals like you and me, for whom being a mentor is no disguise.

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